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DIRECTOR:	Anthony Shaw	

"INCIDENT IN LOT #7"

Written

by

J. Michael Straczynski

#65727

"MURDER, SHE WROTE

"INCIDENT IN LOT #7"

CAST

JESSICA FLETCHER
DARRYL HEYWARD
MARGARET PRYCE
WILLY MONTEGO
JOHN CAVERSHAW
BOB HOPE
BEN MILLER
LENORA HOLT
DIANA NEBLITT

LIMO DRIVER
FIRST GUARD
POLICEMAN
NEWS ANCHOR
FAN
MONICA CHASE
LT. HANRAHAN
DIRECTOR
TONY PERKINS

SETS

INTERIORS

MONICA CHASE'S HOME
  DEN
LIMO
DARRYL'S OFFICE
  INNER OFFICE
LENORA'S HOLT'S HOME
  DEN
COMMISSARY

WILLY'S OFFICE
  LOBBY
BATES MOTEL
  ROOM

LENORA'S CAR
  SOUNDSTAGE
BATES HOUSE
  FOYER
  ADJOINING ROOM
JESSICA'S SUITE
  BATHROOM
STUDIO SECURITY
  HALLWAY
  INTERROGATION ROOM

EXTERIORS

BEN'S CAR
LENORA'S HOUSE
  DRIVEWAY
STUDIO
  DAY (STOCK)
  COMMISSARY
  GATE
  BACK LOT
  DARRYL'S OFFICE
    AFTERNOON
  STUDIO SECURITY
  EXT. LOT (TBA)
  MONICA CHASE'S HOUSE
  DAY

BATES HOUSE
  WINDOW
  NIGHT (STOCK)
  DAY
JESSICA'S HOTEL
  NIGHT (STOCK)
STREET
BATES MOTEL (STOCK)
LIMO

WILLY'S OFFICE
  DAY (STOCK)

MURDER, SHE WROTE
"Incident in Lot 7"

FADE IN:

1 MONTAGE: 1

Shots UNDER MUSIC to ESTABLISH Los Angeles: the Hollywood sign, the Santa Monica pier and other distinct landmarks, under which we RUN CREDITS and END MONTAGE ON

2 EXT. UNIVERSAL STUDIO - MAIN GATE - DAY (DAY #1) 2

A limo glides through the gate and into the studio. We GO WITH THE LIMO as it pulls up to the curb and the driver opens the door. Jessica Fletcher emerges and looks around as MARGARET PRYCE approaches. Margaret is thirties, attractive, business-like but friendly.

MARGARET
Mrs. Fletcher! Margaret Pryce. We spoke on the phone.

JESSICA
Oh, yes, of course. A pleasure to meet you.

MARGARET
Darryl's tied up in a meeting, but he wanted me to escort you to the office. This way.

As they walk, they move past costumed EXTRAS and film crews and all the rush and clamor of a studio.

MARGARET
You know, everyone at the studio is just thrilled about doing a movie based on your novel. It's a wonderful read.

JESSICA
Well, that's very nice of you to say. I'm surprised you moved so quickly, the book's hasn't been out that long.

MARGARET
Darryl doesn't waste time. That's why he insisted you stop by even before you checked into your hotel. He can't wait to see you, even if it's only for a minute. Is this your first visit to Universal?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

JESSICA
Yes. I'm looking forward to exploring a little.

MARGARET
Then you're in for a treat. You never know what'll happen around here.

They head away from what looks like a long, tree-lined avenue...which is actually a FLAT that has been behind them, and is now pulled up and OUT OF FRAME as we go to

3 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 3

which is furnished in pastels and softness, oversized sofas, track lighting and torchier lamps. Into this comes Jessica and Margaret, approaching DIANA NEBLITT, Darryl's personal secretary, who sits at her desk by the door. She rises as they enter.

MARGARET
-- and this is home base. Diana, this is Jessica Fletcher; Mrs. Fletcher, this is Diana Neblitt, Darryl's personal secretary.

JESSICA
Nice to meet you.

DIANA
Hello. Right this way.

She then leads them into

4 INT. DARRYL'S INNER OFFICE 4

She opens the door and escorts Jessica in, and we rising to meet her are DARRYL HEYWARD, forties, a producer of films who has evolved from the shallow end of the gene pool and who has all the morality, ethics and principles of pocket- lint; WILLY MONTEGO, middle fifties, an agent with shined shoes, a neatly pressed suit, and the look of a man forever running for a bus and never quite catching it; and JOHN CAVERSHAW, late twenties, round wire-framed glasses, a thorough-going Yuppie whose point of social reference extends no earlier than the 1970s.

DARRYL
Mrs. Fletcher -- J.B. -- how was your flight?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 4

JESSICA
Quiet, uneventful, just the way I like it.

DARRYL
Wonderful. J.B., I'd like you to meet my agent, Willy Montego --

WILLY
A pleasure. I enjoy your books.

JESSICA
Thank you.

DARRYL
-- and this is John Cavershaw, the writer we've hired to adapt your novel to the screen.

JOHN
Hi.

JESSICA
Mr. Cavershaw.

DARRYL
Please, have a seat. Would you like some coffee, tea...?

JESSICA
I'm fine, thank you. It's good to meet you at last after all those long-distance phone calls. My publisher was quite impressed with your persistence.

WILLY
That's Darryl. This project is all he's been able to talk about for weeks.

JESSICA
Well, now that the legal formalities are behind us, do you foresee any creative problems in adapting the novel?

DARRYL
That's really John's purview. I do know that he's got some wonderful fixes on your book.

JESSICA
Fixes?

4 CONTINUED: 4

JOHN
Just an expression. There's a big difference between what works on the page and what works on the stage. A fix just means taking what's there and making it more visual, not changing it.

At which moment Darryl's wristwatch BEEPS at him. He switches off the time-alarm.

DARRYL
I have to be somewhere in twenty minutes, but I've taken the liberty of setting up a lunch for you later today with John, so you can discuss the story in more detail.

JESSICA
Good, that'll give me just enough time to check in at my hotel. It's been a pleasure meeting you all.

WILLY
We're glad to have you aboard, Mrs. Fletcher. I think you'll have a good time. It may sound like a cliche, but around here, we're just one big, happy family.

And as they go out the door, we cut immediately into

5 INT. LEONORA HOLT'S HOME - DEN - LATER 5

TIGHT ON a glass PAPERWEIGHT as it crashes into a wall, missing Darryl's head by inches. The paperweight has been hurled by LEONORA HOLT, middle forties, cooly attractive and imperious. She is wearing a dressing gown and looking around for something else to throw.

LEONORA
(as it hits)
Damn it, Darryl, how could you do this to me?

DARRYL
Leonora...if you'd just listen....

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 5

LEONORA
The only thing I want to listen to is the glorious sound of something very heavy hitting you right between the eyes.
(throws another)

DARRYL
But I haven't done anything!

Leonora grabs a copy of today's DAILY VARIETY.

LEONORA
No? Check today's trades. "Kevin Maxwell Slated To Co-Star In Filmpic of J.B. Fletcher's THE MESSENGERS OF MIDNIGHT." You know I can't stand that man!

DARRYL
Well, I knew he wasn't on your A list....

LEONORA
You promised I'd never have to work with him again, after what happened last time! He's a -- a --

DARRYL
Creep?

LEONORA
Exactly!

CRASH! This one barely misses. She's getting his range.

DARRYL
Look, Leonora, I don't know where that article came from. I swear I had nothing to do with it. Maxwell probably fed it to the papers himself. He's trying to drum up enough publicity to get the part.

LEONORA
Then he won't be in the movie...?

DARRYL
He won't even be allowed on the set. Honest. Come on, Leonora. Would I lie to you?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 5

LEONORA
For your sake, I'll treat that as a rhetorical question.

He comes up to her, and removes the last paperweight in her hand. Puts it down, and stands bare inches away.

DARRYL
When I bought the rights to J.B.'s novel, I knew it was right for you. I won't let anything get in the way of that. Least of all Billy Maxwell.

LEONORA
I'm sorry. I feel like such a fool. It's just that when I saw that article --

DARRYL
Shh, all right; forgiven, forgotten and gone. Now finish getting dressed, I want you at the studio later to meet J.B. I really think you two will hit it off. Okay?

LEONORA
Okay....

DARRYL
Then I'll see you later.

He gives her a peck on the cheek, and heads out.

6 EXT. MALIBU ROAD - MOMENTS LATER 6

Darryl's car speeds along the shoreline road, the RADIO blasting out a Beach Boys song.

7 INT. DARRYL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 7

As Darryl picks up the car phone and dials.

DARRYL
Diane? Me. Listen, Get on the phone to Kevin Maxwell's agent. Remind him that I offered Kevin the role on the condition that we keep the deal quiet until I say otherwise.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 7

DARRYL (cont'd)
If he opens his mouth again, I'll rip off his eyelids and use them for bookmarks. No, I won't be at the office for another couple of hours yet. I have an important errand to run.

With that, he hangs up and continues on his way.

8 EXT. STUDIO - DAY - LATER (STOCK) 8

Enough to ESTABLISH, then

9 INT. COMMISSARY - CONTINUOUS 9

Jessica enters and HEARS:

FAN (os)
Oh! It's really you! Can I have your autograph? Please?

JESSICA
(turning)
Well, I --

And she stops mid-turn at the sight of BOB HOPE, who is coming out, accompanied by an ESCORT. He accepts a copy of his book, DON'T SHOOT IT'S ONLY ME, from a FAN.

BOB HOPE
Sorry, kiddo, this one's mine.

JESSICA
Mister -- oh, good heavens --

BOB HOPE
Sorry, Mr. Ohgoodheaveans left twenty minutes ago. Sends his regards, though, and says he wants a bigger name plate for his parking space.

JESSICA
Mr. Hope, I just want you to know that I adored your last TV special.

BOB HOPE
(to escort)
I like her. I'll take two.

The Fan takes her book and exits as he turns to Jessica.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: 9

BOB HOPE
I hear they're going to make a movie out of your book, and you're working with Darryl...Wayward...?

JESSICA
Heyward.

BOB HOPE
Right. Yeah, I can't wait to see his face again...preferably on a milk carton under the word MISSING.

JESSICA
Oh? Why is that?

BOB HOPE
Just take my advice and count your fingers every time you shake hands with the guy. Well, I gotta go. Keep punching, Mrs. Fletcher.

JESSICA
I will if you will!

She waves, and he's off. With a smile, she continues into the commissary proper.

10 INT. COMMISSARY - LATER 10

Jessica and John Cavershaw are seated at a table as the waiter finishes clearing away dishes.

JOHN
-- and I got this gig practically the day I got out of college. Darryl read a sample, decided he liked it, and here I am.

JESSICA
Well, it's certainly a wonderful opportunity. And speaking of which, Darryl said you had some ideas about the novel...?

He opens a manila folder and starts paging through.

JOHN
Right. Offhand, I don't see any need to change the structure, just open it up a little.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 10

JESSICA
Open it up....

JOHN
Sure. You know, liven things up. Like the part where the two guys go over the cliff when the brakes fail? I think that if we could make it a car chase the audience would get into it more.

JESSICA
But the murderer was clear across town...he didn't have an accomplice ...how could he run them off the road?

John smiles, pulls off his glasses.

JOHN
Mrs. Fletcher, I see your point, but, I mean, who else is going to ask that question? Does anybody really care about that stuff?

JESSICA
Well, let's come back to that, shall we? What...<u>else</u> did you have in mind?

JOHN
I figured we'd add all the usual ingredients: a steamy romance, another car chase, maybe two or three more murders...oh, and we've got to change the ending. Nobody's going to believe that the killer was the victim's own brother.

JESSICA
Mr. Cavershaw, this novel is based on a true story. You can't just go around changing the ending.

JOHN
Why not?

Jessica is thunderstruck. What does it take to get through to him?

JESSICA
Because that's not what's in the book.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 10

JOHN
Absolutely. That's my point. If the killer in the book is the same one as the killer in the movie, why should anyone pay five dollars to go see the movie? They already know how it ends. So we give them a new killer, make it a surprise. You see? It makes perfect sense.

As Jessica looks at him, absolutely appalled, we go to

11 EXT. MONICA CHASE'S HOUSE - SAME DAY 11

A Malibu home. A quick shot to ESTABLISH as DArryl drives up and climbs out, heading toward

12 INT. MONICA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 12

As the DOORBELL rings. Monica, wearing a robe, goes to the door. Opens it. Darryl stands on the threshold.

DARRYL
Hello, Monica.

MONICA
Darryl.

DARRYL
(closing the door)
Your husband around?

MONICA
No. He's out of town. Won't be back until Tuesday.

DARRYL
Good.

And he goes to her, kisses her. She returns the embrace as we PAN DOWN in time to see the robe drop to the floor, nesting at her feet as we discreetly go to

13 EXT. COMMISSARY - LATER SAME DAY 13

As Jessica and John Cavershaw emerge from lunch.

BEN
Mrs. Fletcher!

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 13

Jessica turns to see BEN MILLER approaching. In his early sixties, Ben is large, bear-like, with a quick smile and trusting nature.

JESSICA
Yes?

BEN
Ben Miller, Darryl's head of production. Margaret told me I'd find you here. Hello, John.

JOHN
Ben. Well, I'd better get back to the office. See you later, Mrs. Fletcher.

John heads away as Ben walks alongside Jessica.

BEN
I'm really looking forward to working on The Messengers of Midnight. It was a heck of a read.

JESSICA
Thank you.

BEN
Margaret told me this is your first time on the lot, so I had an idea. See, before I went to work exclusively for Darryl, I used to work here. Forty years, good times and bad. This is the first time I've been on the lot in a couple of years, so I figured I'd take a look around. You're welcome to join me.

JESSICA
That's very kind of you, but I wouldn't want to impose --

BEN
Nonsense. I'd love to. Besides, I know every inch of this place, and if you really want to do it up right, I'm your man.

JESSICA
Well...all right. You talked me into it.

And with a smile, she walks off alongside him.

14 EXT. STUDIO - GATE - SAME TIME 14

A GUARD stands at the gate, clearing cars and people individually as they pass into the studio. We PULL BACK to REVEAL someone watching. His name is OLIVER THISTLE, in his fifties or older, a stone movie fan. He edges toward the gate, but turns away as the guard looks in his direction. Another aborted attempt further convinces us that Mr. Thistle, in the tradition of studio gate crashers, is trying to slip onto the lot.

Extras in costume move past the gate as a honey wagon trundles out past the GUARD. As the wagon momentarily blocking the guard's view, Oliver takes adavantage of the blind spot and sneaks onto the lot, walking quickly to blend into the crowd of others. PAN WITH Oliver, his eyes wide at the blur of sound and movement that is a studio. If this isn't heaven, it's a darn close second.

15 EXT. STUDIO - BACK LOT - SAME DAY 15

We FIND Ben's electric studio cart in the Western Streets part of the studio. It comes to a stop UNDER:

BEN (vo)
You know how many films were made here between 1913 and 1982, when I went to work for Darryl?

16 EXT. BEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 16

As Jessica and Ben climbs out of the cart and walk onto one of the Western sets.

BEN
Two thousand, six hundred and forty one.

JESSICA
Amazing. And you've been here how long?

BEN
Came aboard in 1946, back when a movie ticket cost forty cents. I was just a kid. A messenger boy. Got to see all the stars...Donald O'Connor, Deanna Durbin, Abbott and Costello...right down that street's where we made Winchester 73 with Jimmy Stewart. Leaving here was pretty tough, but Darryl made me an offer I couldn't refuse. Now, though...it's good to be back.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

JESSICA
(pointing ahead)
What's over that way?

Ben hesitates, then continues:

BEN
Something you might as well see, what with you writing murder mysteries and all. Come on.

They start up a small hill.

JESSICA
You sound reluctant.

BEN
(a beat, then:)
What do you know about quantum physics, Mrs. Fletcher?

JESSICA
Not much, I'm afraid.

BEN
Me, either. But my grandson's into that stuff. He told me about a thing called Shroedinger's cat. The idea is...you take a cat, a cannister of poison gas, and put 'em in a box together. There's a fifty-fifty chance that the poison gas will go off and kill the cat while the box is closed. According to this guy Shroedinger, as long as the box remains closed, the cat isn't dead or alive; it exists in both states simultaneously. It's only when you open the box and look inside that the two possibilities collapse into one reality.

JESSICA
Meaning...the way you look at something helps determine what it is. Perception affects reality.

BEN
Exactly.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

JESSICA
Well, it's an interesting theory, but what does it have to do with what's waiting over that hill?

BEN
Well, see, it got me thinking about evil. What happens, Mrs. Fletcher, when you build a place, and spend dozens of years and millions of dollars convincing people that it's the most evil place on earth? That there's something <u>not right</u> about it?
(beat)
If you do a good enough job of it, really <u>convince</u> people that it's evil...does it become evil?

JESSICA
I don't know. I suppose it would depend on what <u>it</u> is.

They come up over the rise and Ben points.

BEN
I'm talking about that.

Jessica turns, and reacts.

17 WHAT SHE SEES: 17

The Bates house, from the PSYCHO movies. It hunkers against the hill, a wood and stone blot against the daylight, its angles all wrong, a vision out of nightmare and celluloid.

BEN (vo)
The Psycho House.

18 JESSICA 18

looks up at it, and we PULL BACK to INCLUDE the Bates house, towering overhead, holding them both in our shot as we

FADE OUT:

<u>End Act One</u>

Act Two

FADE IN:

19 EXT. STUDIO - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY 19

Picking up where we left off, with Jessica closer to the Bates house, looking up at and framed by it.

JESSICA
It's even more impressive up close than on the screen.

BEN
That's one word for it.

JESSICA
Ben, it's a set. You said so yourself.

They advance toward the porch, and the front door.

BEN
I know it's a set. Heck, I helped build it back in 1960. But it's thirty two years since then... thirty two years times millions of people seeing this house in their nightmares...and screaming. After a while, a place like this takes on a life of its own.

JESSICA
Well, it's an intriguing theory, but I'm afraid I can't accept it. Still, it is a fascinating piece of history...the central icon for the most famous murder mystery film ever made.

She tries the doorknob. It won't budge. She looks a trifle disappointed.

BEN
Y'know, if you really want to look around in there, I can get the key.

JESSICA
You don't have to....

BEN
It's no trouble. I'll set it up for tomorrow afternoon.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 19

BEN (cont'd)
(checks watch)
It's getting late. We'd best be heading back. I think Darryl's got another meeting or two for you before he lets you go for the day.

JESSICA
(a laugh)
Meetings...the joy of my existence.

He heads down the steps. Jessica starts down just behind him. Halfway down, she turns and we see

20 THE HOUSE 20

and there's a flash of movement behind the high window where Norman Bates "mother" used to sit.

JESSICA (vo)
Ben?

21 BACK TO SCENE 21

As Ben stops, looks back at her.

BEN
Yes?

JESSICA
I thought I saw --

BEN
What?

JESSICA
Nothing. Probably my imagination.

With a shrug, she takes her gaze from the house and follows Ben down the rest of the way as we PAN BACK TO

22 EXT. BATES HOUSE 22

and now we SEE the profile of our erstwhile fan, Oliver Thistle, in the window, watching them. He closes the curtain and recedes into the shadows as we go to

23 EXT. MONICA CHASE'S HOME - SAME DAY 23

Long enough to ESTABLISH UNDER:

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 23

MONICA (vo)
I can make us some coffee, if you like.

24 INT. MONICA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS 24

Monica emerges from the bathroom, toweling her hair as Darryl fixes his tie and pulls on his jacket.

DARRYL
Thanks, but I've got to get back to the studio.

MONICA
So soon? Devon's hardly ever out of town for a full day.

DARRYL
I know. But then, as one of my investors, I'm sure Devon would prefer to see me making movies than enjoying myself.

MONICA
Not this way, that's for sure.

DARRYL
Which reminds me...these last few months have been...well, very special. And we've both had our share of fun. But I'm afraid this is the end of the line.

MONICA
What're you...you mean for <u>us</u>? Just like that? Boom, it's over?

DARRYL
I thought it was best this way. I need to make some changes in my life, get rid of complications. And this is a major complication. You've got your kids, you've got Devon, and I just don't feel I can deal with all that anymore.

MONICA
You didn't seem to have a problem "dealing with it" when we were in bed all these months. And when I convinced Devon to invest in your company just in time to save your neck.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 24

DARRYL
And I'm grateful. But things change. You know, Darwin: evolve or die. We had our fun, now we emerge from the sea, lose the gills, grow opposing thumbs...and get on with our lives. It's better this way. And we'll still run into each other. We'll have lunch, soon. My treat. Later.

And he's out the door before she can muster up a response. She sits hard, stunned.

25 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 25

As Jessica opens the door...and finds John Cavershaw and Diana, Darryl's assistant, in a clinch. As they hear the sound of the door opening, they pull apart, looking chagrined at being caught.

DIANA
Mrs. Fletcher...

JESSICA
I'm sorry, I seem to have intruded.

JOHN
No, it's all right, I was just leaving.
(to Diana)
Later.

And with that, he heads out. Diana straightens her clothes a little, and smiles at Jessica.

DIANA
Darryl should be back any minute, can I get you anything?

JESSICA
No, I'm fine, thank you.

Diana nods and goes into an adjoining room as Jessica sits. It's barely a BEAT, though, when the door opens again, and Margaret enters with Leonora Holt.

MARGARET
Oh, good, you're here. Jessica, I want you to meet Leonora Holt, our star for <u>The Messengers of Midnight</u>.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 25

JESSICA
A pleasure, Ms. Holt. I enjoyed your last movie enormously.

LEONORA
Thank you. You know, I read your book in one sitting, absolutely gripping. I have just one question: The part I'm supposed to play...the woman investigator who's asked by her old friend to investigate the murder... she wouldn't by any chance be based on you, would she?

JESSICA
(reluctantly)
Well, the fact is...yes. The book is based on a true story, and in this particular case, I was the investigator.

LEONORA
I knew it. I just knew it! This is wonderful. Not only do we have the author, but the heroine of the story, right here!

JESSICA
I wouldn't go that --

LEONORA
We're going to have to spend lots of time together. I want to pick your brain, learn everything I can from you: your life, your work, how you investigate murders, how you dress...I want to make the role as true to life as I can.

JESSICA
That's very nice, but I --

LEONORA
(a steamroller)
I'll have to learn karate, of course, and all those terms: moxie, moll, hood, heaters, how to put somebody on ice and get a piece of the action...oh, it's going to be such fun! I wonder if this means I'll have to learn to type?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 25

Given the choice between responding, and changing the subject, Jessica rises above her horror as Diana ENTERS.

JESSICA
When did you say Mr. Heyward is due back?

Just then, the door opens and Darryl enters.

DARRYL
Sorry I'm late, had to take care of some old business. Shall we?

He indicates the inner office. They enter as we go to

26 INT. DARRYL'S INNER OFFICE - LATER 26

Darryl, Leonora and Jessica are seated at the long conference table.

DARRYL
So you're saying you don't like John's take on the script?

JESSICA
It's not that I don't like it, I'm sure it's perfect for any other movie. It's just that my novels have never been about car chases or explosions or any of that, and to insert them now simply compromises the integrity of the book.

DARRYL
Okay....

JESSICA
And since this one in particular is based on a true story, to start changing the ending -- well, given the choice, I'd rather withdraw the book than see it eviscerated.

DARRYL
Say no more. I agree 100%.

JESSICA
You do? But I thought you liked --

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 26

DARRYL
Truth is, I never wanted him, but the studio forced him down my throat. What matters is that you be comfortable with the movie. Which is why I was thinking that maybe you should write the script.

JESSICA
Darryl, that's very flattering, but I --

DARRYL
I won't take no for an answer. I know you've adapted some of your stories to stage plays, and a movie's no different. It's just bigger, that's all. What do you say?

JESSICA
Well, I'll have to think about it.

DARRYL
Please, do. In fact...I just had a great idea. We can form a little brain trust for you, help you over the learning curve, and let Leonora get a leg-up on her character. While you're in L.A., I think you two should spend as much time together as possible.

Jessica hides it well, but this suggestion is pretty horrorifying.

JESSICA
No, really, I wouldn't dream of imposing....

LEONORA
It's not an imposition at all, Jessica! It's a wonderful idea! I have just a million questions I want to ask you!

Jessica smiles...and you can see in her eyes that she'd rather gnaw off her own foot than get caught in this particular trap. But there isn't much choice just now, so on her look of resignation we go to

27 EXT. STUDIO - ELSEWHERE - SAME DAY 27

A long, stretch LIMO pulls up at the curb, and a STAR and her entourage emerge, waving to others as they continue into one of the buildings. As they go, we see

OLIVER THISTLE, our pre-eminent fan, peeking around the corner. He notes the limo, and watches as the limo DRIVER checks his watch and walks off.

Oliver walks toward the limo, whose rear door stands open. Oliver peeks inside. Looks around. Nobody's around. He hesitates, then climbs gingerly into

28 INT. LIMO - CONTINUOUS 28

and makes himself comfortable. Checks out the champagne cooler, runs his hands along the seat, bounces up and down a little. He stretches out, trying to put his feet up on the seat that faces him, but it's too far and he's too short. He then spots the car phone, and picks it up. In a deep, authoritative voice he speaks to no one:

OLIVER
Hi, Goldie, listen, tell Arnold I'd love to do his movie, but I'm just up to my ears. And tell my broker to buy another ten thousand shares of...well, anything, what the heck, and get word to Jane that I'd love to have dinner Thursday with her and Ted. Anyone else call? Madonna who? Well, next time get a last name, or you're fired!

He hangs up. And for a moment, the gleeful look on his face fades. He runs his hands longingly over the deep leather seats. He knows he will never have this in his lifetime. But at least he had it for a moment, here and now. With a final SIGH, he steps out to

29 EXT. LIMO 29

just as the limo DRIVER is coming back with a cup of coffee. The driver spots him:

LIMO DRIVER
Hey, you! Hey!

Oliver spots the driver, and dashes out of the limo, hitting the ground at a dead run. The driver pursues.

30 THE CHASE 30

wends its way between two soundstages, where a GUARD with a red flag warns off traffic during filming. Oliver shoots past him, the driver pursuing.

LIMO DRIVER
Stop that guy! I think he crashed the studio!

The guard joins the chase, as Oliver ducks into

31 INT. SOUNDSTAGE 31

where a 1940s crime movie is being made. Oliver charges through the set just as a pair of period MOBSTERS turn toward him, Tommmyguns in hand, and begin BLASTING.

Oliver runs, ducks, panics as bullets appear to hit all over the place, slow to pick up on the fact that the bullets are blanks, and the "impacts" are squibs. And we HEAR the

DIRECTOR (os)
Cut! CUT!

As the squibs stop, Oliver dashes out through the other door, avoiding his pursuers who get caught up in the crowd of crew members long enough for Oliver to get away.

32 EXT. STUDIO - ELSEWHERE - MOMENTS LATER 32

As an exhausted Oliver stops, looks around...and looks up to the Psycho house. With a final glance to make sure no one is following, he starts toward the old house.

33 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - NIGHT (#1) 33

where Diana is packing up for the night, Darryl visible in his office, going over paperwork.

DIANA
If you don't need anything else, I'm out of here.

DARRYL
See you tomorrow.

She goes into an adjacent room to get her coat just as the front door opens and Monica Chase enters. She makes a bee-line right for Darryl's inner office.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: 33

DARRYL
Monica...?

During the following, Diana emerges from the other room with her coat, catching the exchange:

MONICA
All afternoon I've been running our little talk through my head. You know, at first I wasn't going to fight it. Let it go, I thought. Be mature. But damn it, I'm not going to let you use me and then just throw me aside like this.

DARRYL
I don't have much choice. There's a pending deal with the studio, and they felt that involvement with an investor was...inappropriate. Now, look, this is neither the time nor the place --

MONICA
No? All right, let's reconvene at your house. How do you think your wife would react if she found out about what went on between us?

DARRYL
I see no reason for her to know.

MONICA
I do. I see plenty of reason. Like hurting you the way you hurt me, for starters. I'll do it, too.

DARRYL
Over my dead body.

MONICA
Suits me right down to the ground.

UNDER this part, Diana discreetly moves to the front door, avoiding being seen by either of them, and lets herself quietly out. As the door closes, we go to

34 EXT. STUDIO - BATES HOUSE - SAME NIGHT (STOCK) 34

A WIDE SHOT that includes the hotel below. We PUSH IN on the scene, and cut to

35 EXT. BATES HOUSE - UPPER WINDOW 35

The window frequented by Norman Bates' mother. And as we watch, a single LIGHT glows to life within the house. We HOLD on that, and slowly DISSOLVE TO

36 EXT. STUDIO - DAY (DAY #2) 36

PANNING the studio, ending on the building that houses Darryl's office, UNDER:

BEN (vo)
You wanted to see me, Darryl?

37 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 37

Where Darryl, looking tired, pours a cup of coffee.

DARRYL
I did. Have a seat

BEN
You look bushed.

DARRYL
I had a bad night.
(beat)
Ben, I've been looking over our operation, and I've decided it needs some streamlining. New blood, fresh faces, enthusiasm. I want to bring in a whole new production team.

BEN
Well, that's going to be tough on some of our regular guys, but if that's what you want, I suppose I can work with a new team.

DARRYL
Actually, Ben...I'm afraid you're one of those who'll have to be replaced.

BEN
But...why?

DARRYL
That's really none of your concern.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: 37

BEN
What do you mean it's none of my concern? When I quit the studio to come work for you, you promised that I could have the job as long as I wanted it! And now you pull this on me?

DARRYL
I'm sorry, but there's no other way. I need to streamline things.

BEN
Yeah, great, you just streamlined me right into the unemployment line. Where am I supposed to get another job at my age? I sacrificed thirty years of seniority to work here.

DARRYL
I'm sure things will work out.

BEN
No! Not a chance! I'm not going! This is my job, this is my life, and I intend to keep it!

DARRYL
Ben...you can either leave with dignity, and a month's severance pay, or I can call security and have you removed. Your choice.

Ben's face tightens, and he stalks toward the door, pausing to shoot a glance back at Darryl.

BEN
This isn't over, Darryl. Not by a long shot.

And he storms out of the room.

38 EXT. STUDIO - DAY - LATER 38

As Jessica emerges from a cab and walks in the general direction of the commissary.

39 INT. COMMISSARY 39

Jessica enters and looks around, finally spotting Darryl at lunch with his agent, Willy.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

Darryl looks up, spots her, and waves her on over to their table.

DARRYL
Jessica, here, have a seat, join us. You know Willy, my agent....

JESSICA
Yes, we met the other day.

WILLY
Mrs. Fletcher.

DARRYL
We were just finishing, would you like to join us for coffee?

JESSICA
No, that's all right, I was just looking for Ben.

DARRYL
Ben's...not available just now.

JESSICA
Oh. I see. That's too bad; he'd promised me a tour of the Bates house the other day, and --

DARRYL
No problem: I'll get the keys and finish your tour myself.

Darryl stands, takes a large, blue sheaf of papers and sticks it into his vest pocket.

WILLY
Darryl....

DARRYL
I think we're finished here, Willy, don't you?
(to Jessica)
I have to run a few quick errands, so why don't you grab the shuttle and meet me there at three-thirty?

JESSICA
Done. See you then.

Jessica and Darryl head out. We STAY ON Willy, looking not terribly happy with his lot in life, as we go to

40 INT. BATES HOUSE - LATER SAME DAY 40

As the front door opens, and Darryl enters, alone. He looks around, checks his watch. He steps into an adjacent room...and after a BEAT turns at the SOUND of the front door.

41 EXT. BATES HOUSE - SHORTLY AFTERWARD 41

Jessica gets out of the studio shuttle, and passes the GUARD who moves aside a gate to let her pass. She moves toward the house, noticing a car parked nearby. Looks around. Checks her watch: 3:35. Glances up at

THE HOUSE

and we catch a FLASH of movement in one of the windows.

JESSICA ascends the steps toward the house and steps onto the porch. Looks around again. She turns and tries the door. It OPENS with a slow creak. Hesitating a BEAT, she steps into

42 INT. BATES HOUSE - FOYER 42

And everything is just as we remember it: the staircase rising toward the second floor, a somber and dark place. She steps further inside, glances about.

JESSICA
Darryl?

No response. She starts toward the staircase. Puts a hand on the railing. Hesitates, then crosses instead into one of the adjoining rooms. Turns, and sees DARRYL HEYWARD, slumped to the floor, a small pool of blood puddling beside his head as we quickly go back to JESSICA as she reacts to this discovery, and we

FADE OUT:

End Act Two

Act Three

FADE IN:

43 EXT. BATES HOUSE - SAME DAY 43

We SEE Police Cars parked in front of the house UNDER:

HANRAHAN (vo)
And you didn't see anyone leaving the house as you arrived?

44 INT. BATES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 44

The scene has moved back to the foyer as a body (hidden beneath a blanket) is wheeled out the front door.

JESSICA
No. Lieutenant. But as I came up the steps, I thought I saw a flash of movement behind one of the windows. My guess is that someone was here, and slipped out after I came inside.

HANRAHAN
All right, anything else?

JESSICA
Yes, one thing.

They move back into

45 INT. ADJOINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 45

where some Forensics boys are going over the scene. She leads Hanrahan to a spot near where the body was found.

JESSICA
Over there....

46 HER POV - THE FLOOR 46

A long, reddish blood smear stains the floor, wide at one end, very narrow at the other, looking vaguely streaked.

JESSICA (vo)
You noticed the blood smear? Narrow at one end, wide at the other?

47 BACK TO SCENE 47

As Hanrahan bends down to look at it.

HANRAHAN
Yeah, I saw it when I came in. Looks like something was dragged through the blood...or the body was moved....

JESSICA
I'm not so sure. It may be --

DIANA
Ohmygod...!

They rise and turn as a frantic Diana enters the room.

DIANA
I saw the ambulance leaving, but I couldn't believe -- is it true? Is Darryl --

JESSICA
I'm afraid so.

HANRAHAN
Ma'am?

JESSICA
Detective Hanrahan, this is Diana Neblitt, Darryl's personal secretary.

HANRAHAN
I'm sorry about your loss, Ms. Neblitt. This may not be the best time, but I'm going to have to ask you a few questions.

DIANA
I understand....

HANRAHAN
Is there anyplace we can go, away from here? Maybe get the whole staff together?

DIANA
I...yes, the office. Just one thing, Lieutenant...I may have an idea who might've wanted to hurt Darryl...but I'd rather tell you privately, if I could.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 47

JESSICA
(at his glance)
That's fine. I'll see you there in a few minutes.

And she heads out as we go to

48 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 48

Margaret and Jessica are present as Ben and Willy enter. Though we WILL NOT DWELL ON IT, when Willy sits, we see that one of his shoes looks quite a bit duller than the other, far more polished shoe.

BEN
Sorry it took so long, I ran into Willy in the parking lot -- figured I'd better --

WILLY
I was just on my way in to meet with Darryl. Is it true?

JESSICA
I'm afraid so, Willy.

WILLY
(sitting, numb)
Oh, god....

BEN
And at that house. See? I told you there was something wrong with that place.

WILLY
Is there...is there anyplace I can lie down for a moment? I don't feel --

MARGARET
Through there.

Shaken to the marrow, he walks into the other room, closing the door. Margaret shakes her head in sympathy.

MARGARET
Poor Willy. Darryl was his number one client. The rest of his stable ...well, let's just say that they don't have enough combined wattage to light a very small bulb.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

MARGARET (cont'd)
He was riding Darryl's coat-tails to an early retirement. Now....

BEN
Yeah, well some of us were already being retired early.

MARGARET
Ben, this isn't the time for --

BEN
For what? The truth? The guy was a sleaze. And if I stood here and said I was sorry he's dead, I'd be hit by a lightning bolt the size of Rhode Island. He had it coming.

HANRAHAN
Did he really?

They turn to see Lt. Hanrahan standing in the door to the office behind them, Diana beside him.

HANRAHAN
Would you like to explain that in a little more detail, Mr. Miller? Or would you prefer to have your lawyer present?

And as Ben and Jessica exchange a glance, we go to

49 EXT. JESSICA'S HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT #2 (STOCK) 49

As we HEAR a KNOCKING.

50 INT. JESSICA'S SUITE - CONTINUOUS 50

As Jessica pulls on a robe and emerges from another room.

JESSICA
Just a moment.

She opens the door and Leonora Holt breezes in.

LEONORA
It's appalling, absolutely <u>appalling</u>.

JESSICA
Hello, Leonora.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

LEONORA
I simply can't imagine such a thing. Can you? Darryl...dead. I'm shocked. Simply shocked. Shocked and --

JESSICA
Appalled?

LEONORA
Exactly. Do you have anything to drink around here? Cola or something? I'm hitting my mid-day slump, and unless I have some caffeine, I fall right over.

Leonora looks around, heads to the locked courtesy bar, fiddling with the key UNDER:

JESSICA
I imagine it must have come as a double blow, losing Darryl and the movie like this.

LEONORA
Losing the...oh, dear, no. Studio heads come and go, producers live and die and escape to Mexico with the profits...but the movies go on.

JESSICA
But surely in this case....

With a SIGH, Leonora gives up trying to open the bar with the dopey key they always give you for these things.

LEONORA
Jessica, out of every tragedy comes some good. You're a writer, think about it: the producer of a big-time murder mystery is murdered on the eve of beginning his film in the very bowels of the Psycho house. What does it do for you?

JESSICA
You can't seriously mean --

LEONORA
It's <u>publicity</u>. The studio will assign us a new producer, I'll star as planned, and it'll be a blockbuster. Especially once we solve the murder.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: 50

JESSICA
I'm sorry...when we what?

LEONORA
Now, don't tell me you weren't going to try and solve this one...and you've got to let me help out, be your apprentice.

JESSICA
I couldn't possibly --

LEONORA
Now, Jessica, don't worry, it's not an imposition. I'd love to do it.
(checks watch)
Oh, look at the time. I'll come by first thing tomorrow, and we can start laying out our strategy. See you then!

And WHOOSH! She's gone. Stunned, Jessica walks over to the locked bar. Shakes her head at the encounter, and gently taps the locked bar. It pops open. She pulls out an orange juice and heads back into the other room.

51 EXT. MONICA CHASE HOUSE - MORNING (DAY THREE) 51

We note a police car and a waiting POLICEMAN UNDER:

MONICA (vo)
I'm afraid I don't know what you're talking about, Lieutenant.

52 INT. MONICA'S HOME - DEN - CONTINUOUS 52

Monica turns from the window to face Lt. Hanrahan.

HANRAHAN
We have a witness who says you threatened Darryl Heyward shortly before he was murdered.

MONICA
His secretary, Diana, right?

HANRAHAN
I'm afraid I can't tell you that.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

MONICA
Well, if it is, I wouldn't believe anything she says, Lieutenant. Darryl told me all about how she wormed her boyfriend John Cavershaw in to write his movie. She was working both sides of the bed, if you know what I mean. I wouldn't even be surprised to find out that she killed Darryl.

HANRAHAN
What would she gain by that? Or by lying about your threat?

MONICA
Maybe you should ask her that question.

Hanrahan considers this, and nods, starting for the door. He stops just short of the door and glances back at her.

HANRAHAN
One thing: where were you yesterday afternoon between 3 and 4 p.m.?

MONICA
I went out for a drive. By myself. Didn't get back until about six. If you want, I'm sure I can produce a witness.

HANRAHAN
I'm sure you could too, Mrs. Chase. Be seeing you.

He then heads out to

53 EXT. MONICA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 53

as Hanrahan approaches the waiting Policeman.

POLICEMAN
Get anything?

Hanrahan glances back at the house and nods.

HANRAHAN
She's lying.

POLICEMAN
Which means --

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

HANRAHAN
Nothing. First rule of homicide investigation: <u>everybody</u> lies. The only question is who's lying the most...and why. C'mon.

He gets into the car as the Policeman gets in the drivers side and starts the engine. As they pull away, we PAN BACK TO the house, where we see

MONICA CHASE looking out through the curtained window, watching as they drive away, her face a mask.

54 EXT. STREET - LATER 54

PAN WITH a car moving through Beverly Hills UNDER:

LEONORA (vo)
You know, you're lucky I came along when I did.

55 INT. LEONORA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 55

Leonora is driving, a chagrined Jessica beside her.

LEONORA
Who knows <u>how</u> long you might've ended up waiting in front of your hotel for a cab.

JESSICA
Yes, lucky....

LEONORA
So what's the plan once we get to Willy's place?

JESSICA
We talk to him.

LEONORA
Uh, huh. And...?

JESSICA
We listen to what he has to say.

That's it. Leonora looks over at her.

LEONORA
Oh. Do you really find out much that way?

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: 55

JESSICA
Volumes.

And off Leonora's dubious reaction, we go to

56 EXT. WILLY MONTEGO'S OFFICE - DAY (STOCK) 56

An attractive, but not terribly expensive building.

WILLY (vo)
I understand your concern, Mrs. Fletcher, but I don't see what I can do to help.

57 INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 57

It's a nicely appointed office, lots of wood and potted plants. Not ostentatious, but comfortable. Willy sits behind his desk, Jessica standing before him, Leonora wandering the office behind her, looking for...well, whatever Leonora thinks she'll find.

JESSICA
Willy, if Darryl's death was an attempt to keep the movie from being made, we need to find out now before anyone else is harmed.

WILLY
I agree, but I don't know of any threats made against either Darryl or the movie. There's nothing I --

Leonora stops looking around and wheels on Willy.

LEONORA
C'mon, Willy, stop running a number and give us the straight skinny. Somebody must've wanted to finger Darryl, and if anybody'd know who the triggerman was, it's you.

Willy looks from Leonora to Jessica:

WILLY
Is she like this all the time?

JESSICA
I believe what my colleague is trying to say is...are you sure you can't think of anyone who might've want to harm Darryl?

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: 57

WILLY
I already gave that list of names to Lieutenant Hanrahan, who asked me not to tell anyone else. It's strictly confidential.

LEONORA
All right then, fine, we'll play it your way. But stay local, Willy. We may need to talk to you again.

And with that, Leonora breezes out. Jessica shakes her head and looks with sympathy to Willy.

JESSICA
Thank you for your time, Mr. Montego.
(as she goes)
It's a tragedy, to be sure, but at least you had the chance to see him just before...well, before. In fact, weren't you the last person to see Darryl alive?

WILLY
Yes. At the commissary, Mrs. Fletcher, same as you. Darryl and I were having lunch to celebrate renewing our agent/client contract for another two years.
(beat)
He had great plans. He could've been another Spielberg or a Lucas. Now....

JESSICA
Yes. Well, thank you again, Mr. Montego.

She heads out of his inner office into

58 INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - LOBBY 58

where Leonora is waiting by the door. As they exit:

LEONORA
Okay, who's next on the list? Ben? Margaret?

JESSICA
I'm not sure yet.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 58

LEONORA
So how'd I do?

JESSICA
Well, let's just say that I was truly astonished.

LEONORA
That good?

JESSICA
Mmmmm....

And they're gone, and we go to

59 EXT. STUDIO - DARRYL'S OFFICE - ESTABLISHING (SAME TIME) 59

Just a quick shot UNDER:

DIANA (vo)
Yes, can I help you?

60 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 60

STAY CLOSE on Diana, at her desk, and we can just barely SEE someone beside the desk as suddenly the phone rings.

DIANA
Oh, hang on --
(grabbing phone)
Hello? No, I'm afraid no. No, I don't know what'll be done about pending invoices, you'll have to take that up with accounting. Thank you.

She hangs up and makes a note, not looking up as:

DIANA
Sorry. What did you want again?

VOICE
I was just wondering if you knew when Leonora Holt would be in.

DIANA
She's not expected back until late this afternoon. Can I give her a --

Just then the phone rings. With an exasperated SIGH she grabs the phone...

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: 60

as we PAN AROUND TO REVEAL that the person inquiring is none other than Oliver Thistle.

DIANA
(into phone)
Hello, Balrog Productions?

OLIVER
(over this)
That's okay. No message. I just have something to give her. But it can wait. I can wait.

And he turns and exits as Diana continues the phone conversation in ad-lib, and we go to

61 INT. JESSICA'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME DAY 61

As Jessica opens the door and comes inside. She looks exhausted. She sits, then glances at the TV remote control and her watch:

JESSICA
Oh, the news....

She switches on the TV, and starts flipping channels. We come across a LOCAL NEWS ANCHOR:

NEWS ANCHOR
-- spokesman with the Los Angeles Police Department who said that the investigation into the apparent murder of film producer Darryl Heyward will continue to be of the higest priority. In other news....

JESSICA
Darn....

Jessica frowns. She just missed the report. She flips channels again, and suddenly, there on the TV is

62 A SCENE FROM PSYCHO 62

As Investigator Arbogast enters the Bates house. We INTERCUT with Jessica as we watch him enter, glance around, and then start up the stairs. We SEE a door creak open, a thin sliver of light falling on the carpet as he comes to the top of the stairs...as suddenly the door BLOWS OPEN and a FIGURE races out of the room, knife upraised, music screaming at us, when abruptly, back in

63 INT. JESSICA'S ROOM 63

there's a KNOCK at the door, startling Jessica (and letting us cut out discreetly). She switches off the TV and goes to the door, opening it to find John Cavershaw standing in the hallway. He carries a manila envelope.

JOHN
Mrs. Fletcher.

JESSICA
Oh, John, come in, please.

He enters, and she closes the door.

JOHN
I was just in the neighborhood, and thought I'd drop these off. After our conversation the other day, I decided you were right about the changes. So I wrote up some new approaches to adapting the book. I think you'll approve.

JESSICA
Well, I appreciate that, though I still find it hard to believe that the studio is still going ahead with the project.

JOHN
I guess they've got too much invested in it. It was a big deal from the start.

JESSICA
How so?

JOHN
Well, now that Darryl's gone, I guess I can tell you. See, he'd asked me to keep it quiet, but... The Messengers of Midnight was the first of a five movie deal he'd made with the studio. It was going to mean millions for him.

JESSICA
I see. Ben mentioned that Darryl was streamlining the company, letting people go...was that part of the deal?

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: 63

JOHN
Yes. The studio was going to underwrite everything, and that meant getting rid of deadwood, replacing others with some of the studio's people to pay off prior committments...and Darryl never much liked sharing the wealth with other people.

JESSICA
John, before Darryl was killed, did he mention anything to you about the script?

JOHN
Just that he was very happy with my work. Why?

JESSICA
No reason. Just curious. Well, I'd better change if I'm going to meet Leonora for Phase Two of her internship.

JOHN
Good luck. At least now it won't be wasted.

JESSICA
Wasted? How?

JOHN
Darryl never wanted Leonora on the movie. He only took her because the studio insisted. So he was going to bring on some actor named Kevin Maxwell to co-star. She hates Kevin, and Darryl knew she'd rather quit than work with him. But now that Darryl's gone, I guess she's back on track again.

JESSICA
Yes...so it would seem.

And on this we go to

64 EXT. STUDIO - DARRYL'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (SAME DAY) 64

PUSHING IN on one of the windows UNDER:

LEONORA (vo)
Jessica, really, that's absurd

65 INT. DARRYL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 65

Where Leonora paces, Jessica studying her closely.

JESSICA
Then you knew nothing about Darryl wanting to replace you.

LEONORA
Absolutely. That was only a rumor about Kevin Maxwell. And even if it were true, I'm a professional. If they'd wanted to hire Billy, I wouldn't have a problem in the world with that. I'm a big fan of -- his movies.

She looks at Jessica, who isn't sure she believes Leonora or not. She's about to ask another question when Diana sticks her head in the door.

DIANA
Mrs. Fletcher? A call for you on line two. A Dr. Seth Hazlitt?

JESSICA
Oh, that's right. I have to give him the new flight schedule so he can pick me up at the airport. If you'll excuse me, Leonora.

Jessica exits, closing the door behind her. Leonora, alone, paces nervously in the room. She turns her back on the ground-floor window, which slowly slides OPEN.

STAY ON Leonora as there's a sudden SOUND behind her. She turns to find Oliver Thistle coming in the window.

OLIVER
Leonora, hi. I went to a lot of trouble to find you.

LEONORA
Who are you? What are you --

OLIVER
But I'd do it again in a minute. I did everything for you, Leonora.

On that, he reaches into his windbreaker and pulls out a small gun, almost a ladies' gun. Leonora's eyes go wide.

OLIVER
I did it all for you. And this, Leonora, this is for you, too.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

And on her panicked expression, as Oliver advances, we

FADE OUT

End Act Three

Act Four

FADE IN:

66 INT. DARRYL'S INNER OFFICE - AFTERNOON 66

Everything as before: Oliver advancing toward Leonora, holding a small gun in one hand. Leonora's mouth works, trying to make a sound, but fear strangles the sound.

OLIVER
I did it all for you, Leonora. I saw Mrs. Fletcher over at that house, and I waited for you to come. You didn't. But that's okay. I knew I'd find you sooner or later.

UNDER this, the door behind Oliver opens, and Jessica starts to re-enter when she sees the scenario before her. Thinking fast, she gets behind the large desk chair and shoves it with all her might at Oliver.

The seat catches him behind the knees, and he falls backward into the chair. The gun, knocked from his hand, skitters across the floor, and Jessica picks it up. Points it at Oliver as she says to Leonora:

JESSICA
Call security, Leonora.
(Leonora's frozen)
Leonora...now.

Leonora races from the room as Oliver shakes his head.

OLIVER
Now why'd you have to do that? I didn't mean any harm...I'm her number-one fan.

And on that note, we go to

67 EXT. POLICE STATION - LATER 67

The official-looking sign tells us where we are UNDER:

LEONORA (vo)
Are you trying to tell me it was a <u>prop</u> gun?

68 INT. POLICE STATION - OBSERVATION ROOM 68

A darkened room through which we can SEE Oliver Thistle alone in the adjoining interrogation room through a two-way mirror. Leonora and Jessica stand with Lieutenant Hanrahan. He hands her the gun.

HANRAHAN
Yes, ma'am. Take a look.

LEONORA
It looks familiar....

HANRAHAN
It should. It's a prop from your first movie, THE LADY TAKES A DIVE. According to the suspect, he found it at a movie memorabilia sale in Wisconsin, and came all the way here to give it to you. All he wanted in return was a photograph.

Leonora peers out at Oliver through the mirror.

LEONORA
You know, it's rather sweet, in a loopy sort of way.

HANRAHAN
He also mentioned something about dinner.

LEONORA
It's not <u>that</u> sweet.

JESSICA
Lieutenant, can I talk to him?

HANRAHAN
Sure, why not.

Jessica and Hanrahan enter the adjacent room.

69 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER 69

We pick up in mid-discussion, with Oliver on one side of the table, Jessica and Hanrahan opposite him.

HANRAHAN
You told Leonora Holt, and I quote, "I saw Mrs. Fletcher over by that house, and I waited." Meaning the Bates house?

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

OLIVER
That's right.

HANRAHAN
Then you admit you were there when the murder was committed.

OLIVER
No....

HANRAHAN
You were obsessed with meeting Leonora Holt. You crashed the lot. Waited for her up by the Bates house. Only she didn't show up, it was Darryl, and he threatened to have you thrown off the lot --

OLIVER
That's not true --

HANRAHAN
-- but you didn't want to leave, so you resisted. There was a struggle, and --

OLIVER
No! I didn't do it! Honest! I swear! Why, I couldn't hurt a fly.

JESSICA
Then can you tell us what <u>did</u> happen?

OLIVER
Okay, I admit I snuck in to see Leonora Holt. When I couldn't find her, I was about to give up when I saw you by that house. I'd heard about the movie, and I figured if you were here, then Leonora couldn't be far behind. So I waited. Spent the night up in that house. And it's a pretty creepy place, too, lemme tell you.

HANRAHAN
Just get to the point, all right?

OLIVER
Well, I went out at about three o'clock to get something to eat, and when I came back...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

OLIVER (cont'd)
there he was, on the floor. Dead.
Then I --

He stops. Looks at them, unsure if he should proceed.

JESSICA
Then what, Oliver?

OLIVER
It's just...I heard you and that other guy talking about the house, about how maybe it's evil inside. I didn't believe it. But when I found the body, the house...well, Mrs. Fletcher...it talked to me. It moaned, like it was alive.

HANRAHAN
That's enough --

JESSICA
No, wait. Go on, Oliver. What exactly happened?

OLIVER
The whole house rattled, and the floor vibrated, and it made this awful, mournful sound, sort of a --

And he makes the sound, a deep, wavering, chugging kind of sound, full of starts and stops. Hanrahan covers his face at this performance. But Jessica is onto something.

JESSICA
One last question --

HANRAHAN
Mrs. Fletcher, what's the point? He's setting up an insanity plea. The house "talked" to him...!

JESSICA
Lieutenant, I believe it may have done that very thing. Oliver, when you found the body, did you notice anything about it? Think hard.

OLIVER
Well...there was that long streak of blood on the floor....

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED: 69

JESSICA
Yes, we know that, what else? In particular, was there anything in his pocket?

OLIVER
(considers it)
Papers. Blue papers. I remember because they fell out and they were next to him on the floor.

HANRAHAN
He's lying. We didn't find any papers.

JESSICA
Yes, I know.

Jessica stands, paces to the back of the room, the computer behind her eyes assembling the pieces.

HANRAHAN
Are you finished now, Mrs. Fletcher? Because if so, I have to get this guy downtown.

JESSICA
Of course. But when you book him, I suggest you not add murder to the charges.

HANRAHAN
Why?

JESSICA
Because he didn't do it. Lieutenant, we have to find Ben Miller. I'll explain the rest on the way.

She exits. Oliver leans over to look at Hanrahan.

OLIVER
If you ask me, I think she's onto something.

And off Hanrahan's sour expression, we go to

70 INT. WILLY'S OFFICE - NIGHT 70

It's late, and Willy's packing up his briefcase as, with a KNOCK, Ben appears in his doorway.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

WILLY
Ben, there you are. I just got a call from the office, they're looking for you.

BEN
I know, and I'd prefer it if you didn't tell them you saw me.
(beat)
Willy, I need your help. With Darryl gone, you more or less speak for him, Jessica Fletcher's bound to listen to you.

WILLY
I suppose. Look, what's this all about?

BEN
I heard she's going back up to the Bates house tonight. You know that place isn't healthy, and we've seen that it isn't safe, either. You've got to talk her out of it. Tell her to let the police take care of this. I warned her before, but she won't listen to me.

WILLY
Well, I don't know...did she say why she was going there?

BEN
That's the part that worries me. She says...she says she wants to make the house talk to her.

And on Willy's reaction we go to

71 EXT. BATES HOUSE - NIGHT 71

DRAMATIC UPSHOT of that terrible place, looming against the night. Then we PAN DOWN to Jessica Fletcher, at the foot of the steps. A WIND blows loudly, mournfully, as she gradually ascends the steps toward the house.

STAY WITH HER as she steps onto the porch. Goes to the door. It opens at her touch. She enters

72 INT. BATES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 72

and flicks on the light. There's only one, and it barely illuminates the foyer and the stairs. She starts into an adjacent room, then stops at a SOUND from upstairs. She hesitates, then begins to climb the staircase.

SHOOT THIS TO MATCH THE ORIGINAL FILM SEQUENCE, which we saw earlier. Step by step up the stairs. In a

73 SEPARATE SHOT 73

an upstairs door opens. A sliver of light spills out.

74 JESSICA 74

stops, just short of the top of the stairs. Is someone trying to lure her up there, away from what's here? She turns and descends the stairs, going through an adjacent room into

75 INT. BATES HOUSE BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 75

She steps in just far enough to turn the spigot on the sink faucet. No water comes out.

Instead, from the pipes comes a RUMBLE and a MOANING, as air moves, unsettled, through the pipes. She lets the SOUND continue for a moment, then turns the spigot off. She then goes to the window and looks out.

76 BATES MOTEL - HER POV (STOCK) 76

It waits below, hulking in the shadows of the house.

77 REVERSE - ON WINDOW 77

to show Jessica framed in the window of the Bates House, peering out and finally turning away as we go to

78 EXT. BATES MOTEL - MOMENTS LATER (STOCK) 78

An UPSHOT to the sign before panning down and going into

79 INT. BATES MOTEL - ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 79

80 The door opens and Jessica steps inside. It is as we remember it from the film. She crosses as we go to 80

81 INT. ADJOINING ROOM - OFFICE 81

And someone -- we can't see who, we see only the eye -- is looking through a peephole in the wall, and from

82 HIS POV 82

we SEE Jessica through the hole in the wall, she walks slowly into the motel room's bathroom. We return to

83 INT. HOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM 83

SHOOTING FROM WITHIN THE SHOWER AREA OUTWARD. Jessica goes to the shower, and pulls the translucent curtain back halfway, so that it blocks our view of the door. She reaches in and turns on the spigot.

This time, water rushes out of the spigot. She turns a knob, and the shower comes on. As she does this, her attention on the shower, the DOOR OPENS BEHIND HER, just barely visible to us through the translucent curtain. We SEE a figure coming in the door behind her, moving slowly, slowy forward. It suddenly STOPS as, without looking behind her, she says:

JESSICA
Hello, Willy.

84 ANOTHER ANGLE 84

As she turns, and we see that, yes, indeed, it is Willy.

JESSICA
This is the last place you wanted me to come, isn't it?

WILLY
How did you know?

JESSICA
The house told me. And this.

She pulls a sheaf of papers out of her purse.

JESSICA
It's your contract with Darryl, the one you said had been renewed the day the two of you had lunch. I took the liberty of removing this from Darryl's files. It's the same one I saw on the table that day.

85 FLASHBACK #1 85

As Jessica watches, Darryl folds the contract and puts it in his jacket pocket. Willy looks less than pleased.

JESSICA (vo)
As Darryl folded it and put it into his pocket, I noticed your unhappy expression. I wondered what was going on, but decided at the time that it wasn't my concern.

86 FLASHBACK #2 86

Jessica bends over Darryl's body beside Lt. Hanrahan.

JESSICA (vo)
Later, when we found the body, I noticed that the papers were gone. Since he'd said he had to run some errands before meeting me, I assumed that he had dropped it by the office.

87 BACK TO SCENE 87

as Jessica slowly walks toward Willy, who backs out of the bathroom into the main room.

JESSICA
But he didn't. He had it with him at the house. Before the police arrived, you removed it and forged Darryl's signature to conceal the fact that he intended to fire you.
(holds it up)
It's a good forgery, but to the trained eye, the differences are substantial.

WILLY
But not murder. At best, it's circumstantial evidence.

JESSICA
You're right. It was. Until the house talked to me, the same way it did the afternoon you confronted Darryl Heyward.

88 FLASHBACK #3 (NEW FOOTAGE) 88

EXECUTE THESE AS A SERIES OF JUMP CUTS: Willy arriving at the house. Darryl turning to face him (REVERSE of the previous shot in Act Two.) A soundless, wordless argument. A struggle. Darryl shoves Willy. Willy, angry, grabs the nearest thing at hand and STRIKES Darryl from behind. Darryl falls. Willy, appalled at his own actions, steps around Darryl, and his shoe skids in the blood so that he almost falls. All this UNDER:

JESSICA (vo)
At lunch, you heard him mention meeting me at the Bates house. With a five picture deal worth millions of dollars at stake, you went there to convince him to renew your contract. You argued. There was a struggle...and you reached for the nearest object at hand and struck him.
(beat)
The blow was fatal. As you stepped back in horror, you slipped in Darryl's blood, covering the sole of your shoe with blood.

89 BACK TO SCENE 89

As we continue.

JESSICA
When you left the room to wash off the blood, a studio gate-crasher stumbled upon the body and was frightened by a sound like moaning. I recognized his description. It's the same sound I've heard in my own house when the water's been turned off for some time, and I turn on the spigot.

90 FLASHBACK #4 90

Willy, his shoe in one hand, rushes into the Bates house bathroom, turns the spigot: to no avail.

JESSICA (vo)
When you tried to wash the blood off your shoe, you found that the water had been turned off. The pipes rattled and moaned with the unequal air pressure. Then you remembered the hotel set below.

91 FLASHBACK #5 91

Willy rushes into the hotel room bathroom and tries the faucet. He is relieved to see water coming out, and he runs the water over his shoe.

JESSICA (vo)
You went below and washed the shoe, and in the process dulled the shine. When you arrived at the office later, I noticed that one shoe was duller than the other, but thought nothing of it. Until later.

92 BACK TO SCENE 92

As Jessica concludes.

JESSICA
I'm willing to bet that a fingerprint check here and in the bathroom in the Bates house will confirm my theory. And however thoroughly you may have washed the shoe, there's probably still enough blood remaining for a comparison.
(beat)
There's just one last question Willy: what do you intend to do now? Will you commit a second murder to conceal the first?

The question hangs there for a moment. He slowly advances toward her. We don't know his intention, and neither does he, yet. He stops before her.

JESSICA
I don't think you'll do it, Willy. Striking out in anger is one thing, premeditated murder...no.

His eyes hold hers...and finally he shakes his head. Steps toward the bed and sits hard.

WILLY
It was an accident. I never meant to... I'd stuck with him through all the years when he couldn't get a job, putting off my own retirment, waiting for the big break...and when it came, he was ready to throw me away.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED: 92

WILLY (cont'd)
Why should he pay me or any agent 10% on what he had coming when he could hire a lawyer to handle the paperwork for a fraction of that amount?
(beat)
A man pays his dues and sticks with a client through good times and bad...he deserves more than a kick in the pants. It wasn't fair, Mrs. Fletcher. Damn it, it just wasn't fair.

And he's ruined inside. You can see it. And she can feel some compassion for him.

JESSICA
No. No, Willy, it isn't.

WILLY
Ever since it happened, I can't eat, can't sleep, waiting for the knock at the door, terrified of being caught, frightened by every sound...I can't live that way.

He looks up as, in the hotel room doorway, Lieutenant Hanrahan appears.

JESSICA
You don't have to, Willy. Not anymore. It's over.

He nods, and looks away, despondent, as we slowly

FADE TO BLACK and

FADE BACK IN ON:

93 EXT. BATES HOUSE - DAY 93

As Jessica Fletcher stands at the foot of the hill, looking up as Ben approaches.

BEN
Thought I'd find you here. Don't forget, we've got to get you to the airport by two.

JESSICA
Just wanted one last look.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 93

BEN
I talked to the police. Willy gave a full confession. The man was carrying around a lot of pain.

JESSICA
Well, they say confession is good for the soul. Nothing is harder to bear for an ordinarily decent man than murder. I hope he finds some peace.

BEN
So what do you think about this place now? I was right, wasn't I? Of all the places for a murder to take place, it would happen here.

JESSICA
I disagree. Pain, anger, murder, they have no borders, no geography. What happened here was simply one more chapter in the sad tragedy of human affairs. It could've happened anywhere. No, Ben, there's nothing wrong with this house, nothing evil or strange. It's just a set.

They approach the side road, where the Guard seen before moves aside the gate.

BEN
Yeah, I guess you're right. You know, my mother's been asking me to take her on a tour of this place for her eightieth birthday...maybe now I will.

And as they pass the Guard, he says, softly, almost as if for Jessica's ears alone:

VOICE
Good idea. A very good idea.

She looks back, and as the guard removes his cap and brushes back his hair, we see that it is Tony Perkins. He smiles at Jessica.

TONY PERKINS
After all...a boy's best friend is his mother.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 93

And with a wink, he puts on his cap and heads up toward the Bates house, as we GO TO the reaction on Jessica's face, and we

FREEZE FRAME and

FADE OUT:

The End